

ASHES IN THE CUPBOARD

A Emotional Drama 2-Character Screenplay in Hinglish

Genre: Emotional Drama	Format: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast)	Runtime: 5 - 8 Minutes
Cast: FORMAT: 2-Character Short Film (Duo Cast) Character 1: Vijay (61)	Language: Hinglish	Credit: Story Dil Se Team

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Shaam ka waqt hai. Kitchen mein khamoshi itni gehri hai ki cupboard ke khule darwazon se girti hui dhool ke kan bhi dikh rahe hain. Blue hoti window light mein Vijay, 61, apne plain kurte aur worn shawl ke saath, brass box ko dono haathon se aise pakde hue khada hai jaise woh koi bartan nahi, poori zindagi ho. Nilesch, 36, office clothes mein, briefcase kandhe se utare bina hi, doorway par rukta hai. Uske chehre par thakaan bhi hai aur ek purani defensive aadat bhi. Vijay use andar aane ko kehta hai, bas ek box cupboard ke upar wale shelf se neeche rakhna hai. Nilesch turant samajh leta hai—yeh bhi koi “baith, baat karni hai” type lecture hone wala hai. Woh sarcastic ho jata hai, bolta hai ki aajkal duty, tradition, respect—sabke lecture ka bill sirf usi ke naam kyon aata hai.

Vijay bina bura maane, brass box ko dekhte hue kehta hai ki aaj lecture nahi, ek kaam hai. Nilesch reluctantly aage badhta hai, cupboard key ko dekhta hai, aur box ko haath lagate hi uski aankhon mein ek ajeeb si hesitation aati hai. Vijay use tea cups nikalne ko kehta hai. Chhoti si chai banate hue dono ke beech ki khaamoshi aur bhi bhaari ho jaati hai. Nilesch poochta hai ki itne saal baad aaj hi yeh box kyun yaad aaya. Vijay seedha jawab nahi deta. Woh bas itna kehta hai ki kuch cheezein cupboard mein nahi, dil mein band hoti hain. Nilesch huff karta hai—“Papa, agar phir se maa ki baat ya family ki izzat ki baat...” Vijay use rokh deta hai. Uski awaaz pehli baar thodi kaanp jaati hai.

Woh batata hai ki usne saalon tak khud ko yeh maanna sikhaya ki jo hua, uske baad zindagi normal ho gayi thi. Par sach yeh tha ki woh normal kabhi hui hi nahi. Nilesch ko lagta hai ab bhi koi purana guilt lecture aane wala hai, lekin Vijay aage badhkar brass box kholta hai. Andar rakhi chhoti si safed cloth bundle aur ek purani hospital slip dekhkar Nilesch confuse ho jata hai. Vijay kehta hai ki yeh uski maa ki ashes nahi hain. Nilesch ka chehra thoda sa sakht ho jata hai—phir kiski? Vijay lambi saans leta hai aur bolta hai: “Tumhare bhai ya behen ki.”

Yeh line room ki hawa badal deti hai. Nilesch ka gussa ek second mein freeze ho jata hai. Vijay batata hai ki Nilesch ke janm se pehle unka ek bachcha tha—unborn. Pregnancy mein complication hua, aur doctor ne jo kuch kaha, us waqt Vijay itna toot gaya ki woh kisi se kuch keh hi nahi paaya. Na apni biwi se, na ghar walon se, na baad mein Nilesch se. Usne bachche ki chhoti si yaad—hospital slip aur ashes—iss brass box mein lock kar di, jaise agar cupboard band rahega to dard bhi band rahega. Par dard band nahi hua. Woh har din Nilesch ko dekhkar aur bhi zyada yaad karta raha ki usne ek aur bacche ko khona tha, aur ek ko khud se door kar diya.

Nilesh ke liye twist sirf information nahi, ek emotional collapse hai. Woh samajh jata hai ki jo “silence” usne apne baap mein arrogance samjha, woh actually guilt aur grief tha. Vijay confess karta hai ki usne Nilesh ko kabhi isliye nahi bataya kyunki use darr tha ki kahin woh apne aap ko unwanted na samajhne lage. Par yahi chhupane ki aadat unke beech deewar ban gayi. Nilesh pehli baar apne father ko lecture देने के bajay dekh raha hota hai—ek aisa aadmi jo strong dikhne की कोशिश में andar से kab ka bikhra hua tha. Woh brass box को हाथ lagata hai, phir apne briefcase को side में रख deta hai. Uski awaaz soft हो जाती है. Woh poochta hai: “Aapne mujhe kabhi bataya kyun nahi?” Vijay bas itna kehta hai: “Kyunki main tumhe aur ek loss nahi dena chahta tha.”

Aakhir में Nilesh cupboard से ek tea cup uthata है, dono के liye chai pour karta है, aur brass box को respectfully cupboard के andar nahi, kitchen shelf पर रख deta है—hidden nahi, present. Dono pehli baar bina guard के बात करते हैं. Koi grand reconciliation nahi, bas itna ki ek bacha hua pyaar, jo saalon से silence में dabaa tha, aakhir bol diya gaya. Dusk aur gehri हो जाती है, par kitchen में pehli baar andhera itna bhaari nahi lagta. Ashes cupboard में nahi rehte—unke beech की deewar gir जाती है.